



November 20, 2019

Press Release

R.I. Police Chiefs Association

When: November 27th 2019 Time: 10:00 A.M.

Location: Lincoln Town Hall; Town Council Chambers, 96 Old River Rd, Lincoln, RI

The Rhode Island Police Chiefs' Association will be sponsoring a press conference before the long Thanksgiving holiday weekend to continue the awareness of impaired driving. During the Thanksgiving holiday weekend in 2017, there were 365 passenger vehicles occupants killed in vehicle crashes across the nation.

- The R.I. Police Chiefs' Association (RIPCA) would like to remind everyone that driving under the influence is dangerous, selfish, and is 100% preventable.
- In 2018 Rhode Island had 59 fatalities, which is a decrease of nearly 30% over 2017.
- 34% of fatal crashes in RI during 2018 involved an operator that was impaired, the national average was 29% - Rhode Island remains above average in fatal DUI crashes.
- Over the past 5 years, more people have died in motor vehicle crashes - and more have died in crashes involving alcohol - around the Thanksgiving holiday than over any other holiday period. More than the Fourth of July, Christmas, and even New Year's Eve, which are more commonly associated with alcohol. There are also signs that an increasing number of people are driving when paired by marijuana and other drugs.
- The Thanksgiving Holiday is traditionally a deadly one upon our roadways. The Wednesday night before Thanksgiving is a cultural phenomenon called "Thanksgiving Eve" or "Blackout Wednesday", an evening associated with drinking and a big night for bars. From 2012 to 2016, over 800 people died in alcohol-impaired-driving crashes during the Thanksgiving holiday period (6:00 p.m. Wednesday to 5:59 a.m. Monday), making it the deadliest holiday on our roads.

- The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) is forecasting traffic crash fatalities for the Thanksgiving holiday period of 2019 (Wednesday, November 27 at 6p.m. to Monday, December 2 at 5:59a.m.) shows that **454** people will have died in motor vehicle traffic crashes.

Take steps to prevent impaired driving:

- If you will be drinking, plan on not driving. Plan your safe ride home before you start the party. Designate a sober driver ahead of time.
- Please plan ahead as you celebrate this holiday. Use a non-drinking designated driver, utilize a ride-sharing service or take public transportation.
- If someone you know has been drinking, do not let that person get behind the wheel. Take their keys and help them arrange a sober ride home.
- If you see an impaired driver on the road, contact local law enforcement. Your actions could help save someone's life.
- Check with RideShare Apps for promotional discounts.

The RI Police Chiefs' Association will be partnering with The RI Department of Transportation / Office of Highway Safety, AAA of Rhode Island, NHTSA and RI Police Chiefs Association YOUTH FORCE at the press conference to provide educational material, statistics and discuss statewide efforts to make sure every "turkey" makes it to Thanksgiving dinner!

For Immediate Release

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